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INL contractor outlines achievements, vision after first five years

IDAHO FALLS — Nearly 900 new jobs; university collaborations including the Center for Advanced Energy Studies; more than \$50 million in laboratory investments; business volume nearly doubling to \$1 billion; unprecedented input for the nation's energy agenda. After five years managing Idaho National Laboratory, its contractor has produced two reports highlighting accomplishments and plans for maintaining momentum.

"INL — The First Five Years" and the "INL 2012-2021 Ten-Year Site Plan" represent a look back at how far INL has come since its creation in 2005 and a look forward to where it's headed. Combined with an upcoming five-year review of sitewide cleanup progress, Idahoans have a unique opportunity to assess whether the U.S. Department of Energy's vision for its Idaho site is being realized.

"Halfway through, the lab has made significant strides and cleanup is progressing smoothly," said Rick Provencher, DOE Idaho Operations Office manager, in a recent opinion for Idaho newspapers. "DOE expects that progress to continue so our 10-year vision for INL will be realized."

In 2005, DOE split the former Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory into the research-focused INL and the legacy-focused Idaho Cleanup Project. DOE envisioned INL becoming "the pre-eminent, internationally recognized nuclear energy research, development and demonstration laboratory within 10 years."

The First Five Years report outlines the progress INL contractor Battelle Energy Alliance has made toward that goal. The report highlights six critical attributes BEA sought to achieve, and its progress to date. Accomplishments include:

- Revitalizing nuclear education and research, with an emphasis on collaboration with Idaho universities — Idaho university enrollment in nuclear disciplines has grown from double digits to more than 400, for example.
- Investing in INL facilities, including 10 new buildings and more than \$20 million for maintenance and upgrades at INL's Advanced Test Reactor.
- Leading development of a collaborative U.S. nuclear energy research agenda.

The benefits of these accomplishments spread throughout Idaho, as illustrated in the recent INL Impacts report conducted by Boise State University economists. It concluded that in 2009 alone, INL directly and indirectly accounted for more than 24,000 Idaho jobs, paid more than \$135 million to the state in taxes and fees, contributed \$2.5 million to Idaho universities for employees' continuing education, and made charitable contributions exceeding \$33 million and 240,000 volunteer hours.

Such contributions will persist as the lab continues its transformation into the nation's pre-eminent nuclear energy lab. INL's Ten-Year Site Plan outlines this vision, including:

- At least four new buildings in Idaho Falls, and consolidated and modernized facilities both in town and at the desert Site.
- More National Scientific User Facility capabilities to enhance collaboration with universities, other national labs and industry researchers across the country.
- Input to help DOE respond to National Academy of Sciences recommendations for investment in research capabilities and a process for prioritizing, evaluating and obtaining them.

You can read both reports at the links below.

INL—The First Five Years: <http://www.inl.gov/portal-files/inl-the-first-five-years.pdf>

INL Ten-Year Site Plan: <http://www.inl.gov/portal-files/inl-ten-year-site-plan-2012-2021.pdf>

INL is one of the DOE's 10 multiprogram national laboratories. The laboratory performs work in each of DOE's strategic goal areas: energy, national security, science and environment. INL is the nation's leading center for nuclear energy research and development. Day-to-day management and operation of the laboratory is the responsibility of Battelle Energy Alliance.

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—INL-10-033—

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